

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

WATER EDUCATION FOUNDATION

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BAY DELTA CONSERVATION PLAN MEETINGS

PUBLIC COMMENTS ONLY

FOR:

SACRAMENTO

Sacramento:

Chair: Go ahead.

Mr. Peterson: My name is Glen Peterson and I'm the President of the Association of California Water Agencies. I'm also the elected director of Las Virgenes Municipal Water District for 21 years, and a member of the Metropolitan Water District board of directors for 15 years. The Association Aqua represents more than 450 public water agencies up and down the state ranging from the smallest of agricultural users to the largest water companies. We serve about 90 percent of the water that is served for M & I use and agriculture use throughout the state. In 2005, Aqua's membership united behind a water policy document. It was called No Time to Waste, a Blueprint for California Water. The document identified key water challenges facing the state and called for a comprehensive suite of actions to address them. Fixing the delta is a central element of Aqua's policy blueprint. Aqua's members view the BDCP process as a critical step towards this goal and the larger goal of securing a more sustainable water system for California. Our membership will be participating throughout these hearings throughout the state because it's of paramount importance to us. We welcome the start of this

environmental review process because there's not a minute to lose. We need to get moving on a solution because everyday we wait, another day of environmental decline and the loss of water supplies throughout the state. We must address the shortcomings of a system that was built largely in the 1950's when societal values were less focused on the environment. Without a more sustainable delta, important tools such as recycling, local surface and groundwater storage can not work efficiently and effectively in other parts of the state. The significant public investment of local programs will be at risk. My agency for example, we recycle 20 percent of the water we use in our district. However, we're dependent 100 percent on Metropolitan Water District and the delta water, the water that comes through the delta. We have a well in our community, it's called Old Stinky, and it tells you something about our water quality. This environmental review process will study the impacts of four potential actions, including a no action alternative. This is simply unacceptable for the environment and for the water uses throughout the state. In our view, no action alternative carries some significant impacts including serious implications for interests outside the delta. Water pressure on other supply sources such as groundwater will

increase, and we know about the over draft groundwater in the state. These impacts must be assessed as part of the review. Aqua strongly supports the comprehensive solution that improves the sustainability of the delta for the benefit of the entire state. We must improve the delta so our water supply system can be co-equal objectives with protecting the aquatic environment and providing a reliable high quality water for our state. Thank you.

Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Minton: Good morning, I'm Jonas Minton with the Planning Conservation League. We have the interest of others in finding solutions to the delta's many problems as quickly as possible. With that in mind we have six observations for you today. The first is that recovery should be the first objective. We are somewhat disturbed in seeing initial work by BDCP starting off with attempts to in essence maximize how much water can you take from the delta, export from the delta and still have an okay environment. We think that moving to our second point, what you would need to do the same as if you were doing any other HCP, is first determine the environmental requirements of the eco system. Specifically, what flow regimens are needed in terms of water quantity, water quality, temperature,

flow direction, annually, inter-annually, intra-annually to restore those species. The third point is that as part of the NCCP process scientific input is required. And again, we urge the BDCP process, which is the basis for the EIR-EIS, to fully incorporate scientific input, not just scientific review. So, as we understand it the requirement is that scientific independent experts are asked for their views as options are being formulated, not just to review them after they are presented. The fourth point is that upstream actions should be part of the area that you look at. Not only because it's fairly obvious that anadromous fish go upstream, but that several of the potentially regulated entities, DWR and the Bureau of Reclamation have projects upstream that effect the flows going into the river and then, into the delta. Under your list of conservation activities I did not see a reference to water conservation, water recycling, storm water capture, groundwater clean up, in areas served by exports from the delta as well as upstream areas. And, we believe that those will be key to any successful restoration plan. The last plan I have to offer for you is that we again, share your interest in finding these answers as soon as possible. However, it will not serve any of us well if we try to expedite that process beyond what is feasible, by

which I mean specifically the schedules for completion of the BDCP itself and the EIR-EIS, we note coincide with some political milestones that are upcoming, changes in state administration and it would be a terrible waste if we jumped over some steps or we did not do the due diligence required and find that in two and a half years a new administration decides they have to restart. So, we hope that doesn't happen and we hope to succeed. Thank you.

Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Lorentz: Hello, Shawna Lorentz, San Juan Water District and General Manager. And, I'm making my comments in cooperation with Aqua's. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into the Bay Delta Conservation Plan process. I support the broad goals of the Bay Delta Conservation Plan and would like to add a few comments on additional items to be considered as part of the process. I think you're hearing from all of us urgency is definitely, there's an urgent need for action. The solutions must include actions to insure the environmental sustainability of the delta, that's reached that day where even the water agencies are saying that we have to be environmentally sustained. The solutions need assurances that adequate and reliable water supplies are available for all beneficial

uses up stream and down stream of the delta. The solutions must be based on best science which is becoming rapidly available and changing consistently. Solutions that do not reflect the most recent science will result in money and time spent with ultimate failure. A one size fits all conservation target for urban agencies will not work. There's way too many diverse factors to take into consideration. That said I'm very pro water conservation. I just think a straight across the board uniform conservation reduction quantity isn't going to work. Development and operation of delta conveyance infrastructure must provide environmental protection and water supply reliability in a manner that does not affect upstream water suppliers and the same may not benefit one stakeholder at the expense of another stakeholder. Development of additional surface water storage supplies is a necessary component of any delta solution for both environmental and urban water supply and Ag supply uses. Investment is necessary in conjunctive use programs and coordination among regulatory agencies must be sufficient to allow such programs to be implemented. That said, good luck.

Chair: Thank you. Are you waiting? Go ahead.

Ms. Collins: Jackie Collins, I am a long time delta citizen and resident. My concern, one, is that the vision of circle where you have the two entities of the delta habitat restoration and the water users with an overlap is not a clear vision. It is the same circle. I mean, everything that goes on in the delta is within one sphere, and it's not an overlap that you can deal with a slice in between. My other concern is that during the process of peripheral canal process, the people of the delta fought very hard to have the delta recognized as an actual entity as it was recognized by the original Cal-Fed authorities. Ron Ott and I discuss this a lot. The delta entity as itself still exists, that people raise families, they do business, they live their lives there in the delta yet there's no mention of the impact, and it will be, I know it will be mitigated and it will be mentioned. But, there's no mention of the impact to people's lives that depend upon the delta for their businesses, their recreation, that the delta as the entity pre-described in previous Cal-Fed statements still exists. And yet, it's not part of the steering committee and it hasn't been mentioned in any of the considerations today. And, that's a big mistake. There are many, many people and many, many elements involved that just don't deserve to be ignored. Thank you.

Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Duerig: I'm gonna hold this separately, is it on?

Chair: Yeah, yeah.

Ms. Duerig: I'm Jill Duerig. I'm the General Manager of Zone 7 Water Agency. Zone 7 serves the residents, businesses and agriculture in eastern Alameda County down in the Bay Area. We're sort of a crossroads community if you will; on the eastern end of our service area is agriculture that we serve water from the state water project to. On the western we have some high tech businesses and a lot of residents. In fact, the south bay aqueduct that you see on some of the conveyance concepts drawings is really the aqueduct that takes the water down into the Silicon Valley. It serves almost, well over two million people in the Bay Area. Our population in Zone 7 is actually more closer to 200 thousand residents, but we rely on delta water, water conveyed through the delta to the tune of about 80 percent of our water supply. Our local ground water basin is not large enough to supply the water that we need. However, we do use that ground water basin to store water during wetter years and then during dryer years we can use it as an extra storage when there's reduced pumping. We are really concerned as everybody else in the

room I'm sure is, about the fish population crash. And, we understand that the current operation of the State Water Project by court order rather than using a scientific approach is not appropriate and certainly not the best way to run things. Recent water supply cuts ordered by, or under consideration by the courts impacts Zone 7's ability to provide adequate long term drought protection for its customers. We are now in a second consecutive dry year and are no longer able to make use of the ground water storage that we have to offset future dry years. We are highly supportive of, and as you heard active participants in the bay delta conservation plan because we believe it is the best opportunity to establish a plan that can stabilize both water supplies, and fish species in the delta. Neither can afford to wait. Increasingly efficient use of our water supplies is obviously critical, and we're asking our customers to conserve by 10 percent this year because of the dry conditions and the reduced pumping. In Zone 7 service area, we not only utilize ground water storage to make the most of our supplies, we also have a lot of regional recycling that is also done. However, regardless of our actions we will never be fully independent from delta conveyed water supplies in meeting the health and safety requirements of our

customers. Our participation in the BDCP is about protecting existing water supplies in terms of reliability and quality. And, embracing the most environmentally sustainable ways of doing that, the co-equal objectives of the process, thank you, and we'd like you to continue what you're doing.

Chair: Thank you. I think you can just hand that back, okay.

Ms. King Moon: Laura King Moon with the State Water Contractors. We represent 27 water agencies up and down the state, many urban districts in Southern California, agricultural districts in the valley, and five districts here in the Northern California and the Bay Area. And, you just heard from one of our five Bay Area member agencies. We are facing a crisis. Our system is in crisis today, and we have new species, new fish species crashing just about every month it seems, and our water supplies are fast being eroded by shutting off the pumps to protect the fish species. Some of our most, some of our strongest member agencies with the strongest drought supplies are gonna be out of their drought reserves in a couple of more years if we're not smart about how we're proceeding. And, this is a completely unnecessary situation. We have a comprehensive conservation plan under way. This is what we need to do to fix the

problem. We can't just keep ratcheting down the pumps; we need to find some other knobs. We need to find a comprehensive plan for making the ecosystem and the water supplies that so many people in this state depend on, have co-equal importance. I believe very much in this plan. It is a conservation plan. The benefit of a conservation plan is that there will be a sustaining funding source to carry it out so the species actually can recover. It's the way to go for a smart growth state like California. We need to do this. We need to do it on an expedited time frame, not because of any political agenda but because the state needs us to do this. Thank you very much.

Chair: Thank you.

Mr. Gallagher: Thank you, hello, and my name is Dan Gallagher. I'm the Operations Manager at Dublin-San Ramon Services District. We provide water for the city of Dublin and also portions of unincorporated Contra Costa County. Our area is almost completely reliant on the Bay Delta for our long term water supply. And, we have a very aggressive recycled water program. Last year we provided over 22 hundred acre feet of recycled water for irrigating our parks and schools, and green areas. This year we expect to expand that to about 25 hundred acre feet, so we are using that as a

way to extend our water supply in our area and it will continue to grow each and every year. We support the preparation of the conservation plan and we look forward to a more sustainable water supply for people of the state of California. Thank you.

Chair: Thank you, there you go. Okay, go ahead.

Mr. Broderick: Good morning, Ryan Broderick, Executive Director of the Northern California Water Association and represent about 900 thousand acres of irrigated agriculture in the Sacramento Valley, over 50 agricultural diverters, and I wanted to say congratulations for launching the EIS and the EIR. I look forward to get into the formal evaluation that we think will appropriately identify needs for conservation in the delta water supply for export. However, in saying that I think it's very important that you recognize baseline conditions as it relates to the environment. The Sacramento Valley is distinct from the delta, and yet I think the Sacramento Valley has established over the last 10 years that they will make contributions to the recovery of species. But, there is a concern that recovery of species has an assignment done on effective science as it relates to flows and diversions. Candidly, the delta vision process has raised a specter of beneficial and reasonable use issues that have assigned to

upstream areas without much scientific deliberation as of yet, cause and effect, and we look forward to the BDC process, looking at flows and looking at diversions, I think you should recognize that in the Sacramento Valley the vast majority of water is screened, that there have been commitments to fish passage of very significant proportion. That has been a statewide objective and implemented within the Sacramento Valley probably more aggressively than anywhere else with results that have been good but not to the end result of fixing the issues and schnooks and then in this year finally being the most effective or most recent example. I think it's really important that there be recognition of the area of origin and the water right system, assuming water rights that exist in this state and the fidel (sic) to those assignments will make it easier and actually are fundamental to even having a discussion as to how to provide restoration of delta species. The delta is critical to the Sacramento Valley from the standpoint that any conservation actions we undertake from with the aquatic species, their success is dependent upon a healthy delta. We support the evaluation that's gonna be conducted and I think it's important to recognize the distinction between the delta and the Sac Valley, the map it should be

identified, does that, but we also recognize inter-related and inter-dependent nature of water flows in the Sacramento Valley and those in the delta. However, and the analysis of it could be very important to look at the work that has been done in the conservation that currently occurs on working landscapes in the Sacramento Valley. We look forward to facilitate formal comments about once again issues with respect to the senior water rights or the issues of area erosion need to be considered as a step one in looking at those assignments. And, I think that, in fact I know that the member of my association are prepared to step up and undertake additional conservation actions where the science supports an assignment appropriate to their operations. Jonas Minton mentioned that there are upstream users, or upstream projects related to the state and federal water project, I think its integration of, and recognition that those were junior to the diversions of most of my members, it should be kept in mind and that fidelity to that relationship understood. We're gonna be partners, we're gonna solve the delta. The future in growth of the delta is fundamental to the future grow of the working landscapes in Sacramento Valley. And, I applaud you for getting started in the process.

Chair: Thank you. Is there anyone else who would like to make a comment before we wrap things up? Okay, it's not seeing any other comments; I'd like to thank you very much for coming on behalf of these agencies for taking the time to be here today. I remind you that the comment period ends May 30th. If I didn't say it before, there is an E-mail address to send you comments, BDCP Comments at Water.CA.gov. And, thank you all very much for coming, we're adjourned.

-- MEETING ADJOURNED --